Fellowship in Prayer

"For a world united in prayer"

Walk bodly and wisely. . . . There is a hand above that will help thee on.

— Philip James Bailey

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OUR PURPOSE

To promote the practice of prayer among ALL religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

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GOD'S TIME

FROM THE FIRST primeval movements of life upon this terrestrial plain, the early civilizations began placing limitations upon the movements of man and calling it Time. It is strange indeed that man must rise on newly formed wings and seek the outer periphery of our earth to learn that God does not observe time limitations in his divine plan.

THERE CAN BE NO DENYING that we need to budget our lives so that our various activities can be ordered and purposeful. But we have made ourselves slaves to this tyrant Time. We scatter our forces in all directions striving to keep pace with this rigid taskmaster. We must realize the importance of God's Time above and beyond our self-imposed boundaries. If we would be still a little more, hurry less, take that precious moment given us to think about the manner in which God looks on man's time, we would then begin to grow.

As the astronaut in his orbital flight observes the changing dawn and sunset's mood, and even calmly moves through summer to winter in a seeming matter of minutes on our scale of life, we begin to receive a picture of our world as viewed by our eternal God. He is the alpha and omega, the timeless, ever-present source of life. On God's scale there is seed-time, growing-time, flowering and harvesting. These are the important periods. If we observe these times and pursue our lives in love and service, guided by constant prayer, our man-made time will take on new significance and purpose.

— Zelma S. Dennis

EDITORIAL

THE VALUE OF SUFFERING

After he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.
—Hebrews 6:15

It is indicative of man's ineradicable desire for comfort and aversion to struggle, which we observe so often on the level of worldly living, that even in the spiritual life he imagines that true religion—that of spiritual experience—may be had without suffering, that he can spiritualize his nature with only a minimum of pain and anguish, that he can overcome his animal part and achieve a godly condition—realizing by direct experience the holy and eternal being in whom the world is grounded—and do this somehow without suffering too much, without undergoing the miseries and torments which all great souls of all religions in all ages are known to have endured.

The sober truth is that the struggle is unending, ever imminent, inescapable—a struggle inextricably involved in the effort to make ourselves conscious, seasoned instruments of the Divine Soul of the universe, and come to know beyond doubt, making us free forever, that the Lord himself is the sole Actor and Doer of everything, that it is only the dust of ignorance and egoism which has blinded us into thinking that *we* are the actors, we the doers, we the glorious masters of our destiny. Until we know this, we know little, we know nothing at all. Man as man is nothing, less than nothing, a phantom of time, a leaf blown in the wind for a few brief years; man, as man, has not the strength to move a straw, is at the mercy of forces within and without, influences beyond his control, past his understanding, from his first breath to his last, though he thinks so often of himself as the great center of things.

It is only when he is fighting to overcome his merely human nature, nature itself—the unregenerate, natural, sense-imprisoned part of his being—, it is only when he is engaged in the never-ending battle to spiritualize this, and subdue his sensuality and egoism, that he has any significance. When he is trying to awaken himself out of his self-imposed blindness, is willing to face all the difficulties and spiritual loneliness this great effort will involve, and becomes fired with the need to know himself as an instrument of the great Actor of the world, then, and then only, his life has meaning.

In this effort he must suffer, and suffer strangely, in a way that has no counterpart in ordinary tribulations of the world. His suffering is due, in part, to his protracted separation from the God-consciousness which he seeks, and where his peace lies, *and in part to his very greatness,* the greatness that is there, divine and deathless, inextinguishable, in the fount and substance of his being. Man is great, and is miserable *because* of his very greatness—so long as it is still unrealized, inarticulate, unknown, so long as he still tries to live as a man who some day will die. He must begin to live as someone for whom death, in the end, has no meaning, no existence, for whom the whole universe is a vast backdrop and amphitheatre against which he will work out his spiritual destiny here in this life. Then he will begin truly to live, and until then lives only a shadow-life.

We should consciously and rationally try to rid ourselves of the delusion that life is meant, principally, to bring us happiness. Why should it, we might ask ourselves. Only those who have made little progress toward enlightenment, and who close their eyes to the actual facts of experience and of history, maintain such an ideal. They, and all who follow it, are living in a paradise of fools. The great exemplars and ideals of humanity, the world-saviours, saints and prophets whose words are the ultimate, and only permanent, wisdom of the race, have never set before us the hope that life as we know it is meant to make us happy. *Life in this world is of the very nature of struggle, not of peace.* And this peace is to be *won, not bestowed.*

Happiness is not a gift, but a prize. It is the fruit of spiritual clarity, will power and self-conquest. It can be achieved only by vanquishing and destroying altogether the tendencies in us that would keep us slaves to egoism, sloth and calculation. The immense resistance of our carnal nature must first be broken up and conquered before we can know anything like a sustained and enduring happiness.

In this long (and increasingly exultant) struggle, of which the purpose is the elimination of the self and of which the end is the experience of the Divine, the great thing that happens is the awakening of the will—the higher, spiritual will which is the mighty weapon of the soul in its lonely and ultimately victorious battle to know its own grandeur and unite itself with the Supreme Soul. *For man's will is the real man, is man himself.* In the end, he is beyond even that—he is the Self, the Divine essence, in his true nature: beyond willing, desiring, or struggling. But in all we know of him, all that has passed into our experience, he is pure

will, striving to overcome his physical and mental tendencies toward evil, toward separativeness, toward greed, lust and the desire to control others. Anything that helps us to stir up this limitless force of will within us is, obviously, of great benefit, and since the obstacles of spiritual life do in fact call forth the sleeping energies of the will, we can regard them as necessary tests for us as we go forward, endeavoring to transform ourselves into new creatures.

Our struggles are our blessings if we will see them in their true light. Each one can potentially unlock new areas of the powerhouse of the will, and the experience of each one surmounted is assimilated into the substance of our emerging self as we draw closer to the freedom of self-conquest.

By embracing spiritual adversity and not shirking the suffering which the search for God-consciousness involves, until peace is won, the great saints and prophets of the ages were produced. They knew there was no joy except the joy of God-realization, and that this joy had to be striven for through years of discipline, forbearance, and the endurance of suffering. Let us fill our minds with the inspiration of their lives and struggles and try to imitate them in their heroic acceptance of the burdens they were called upon to bear. We come to resemble whatever we constantly think about. If we think of God continuously, we shall become godlike. If we think of spiritual heroes, we shall become heroic too. If we meditate on the deeper meaning of suffering in spiritual life, we shall the better bear our own suffering when it comes. And if we dwell on the glory of man's will, as it was manifested in such God-men as Christ, Buddha and Ramakrishna, our own will must awaken and along the way we shall experience its breath-taking power and have an instant glimpse, as it shall come to pass in this life or some other, of the inevitable victory of our soul.

* * *

THE MEDICINE OF WORK

If you are poor, work. If you are rich, work. If you are burdened with seemingly unfair responsibilities, work. If you are happy, continue to work. If sorrow overwhelms you, and loved ones seem untrue, work. If disappointments come, work. If faith falters and reason fails, work. When dreams are shattered and hope seems dead, work—work as if your life were in peril; it really is. No matter what ails you, work.

— W. W. Rose

DO NOT SPILL YOUR SOUL

Mildred Long

As long as we are in this world and are in contact with other people, we shall be subject to disturbances of one kind or another. It is not selfish to guard our own souls. It is wisdom.

When your friend comes to you brimming over with an emotion, a problem, a concern about life, let it not get into your soul. Keep it outside. Even if the emotion takes the form of chiding you about your failures, keep steady in the inner awareness. Your friend's chiding may be only an indication that self-examination is going on.

BE SLOW TO OPEN the door of your inner consciousness to outward distress, to another's sorrow or pain. I do not mean to be unsympathetic. I mean to keep detached—to keep yourself quiet and calm, not to spill your soul, not to waste your emotional energies. For after all, if you are to help the other person, two things are necessary: first, to allow him to talk, to unload without you becoming emotionally involved, even if he criticizes you; second, to retain your inner serenity so you can look at the situation with understanding. Only then can your words have weight.

THIS INNER communion of soul with God must go on continually so that you will never find yourself undefended or exposed to outer dangers. This is the discipline you impose upon yourself. For if we do not discipline ourselves, life will require us to do so. It is better to anticipate the need and thus make a positive contribution to life.

DO NOT spill your soul when others are disturbed. Do not boil over or take fire. Retire to the calm center of God's indwelling presence, and thus speak words of wisdom given you from the living fountain. If you allow your emotion to rise up, you obstruct wisdom.

To protect yourself, to help the other person, guard your own soul.

LIFE'S LAWS

Carol M. Mandola

Life is a fountain of living waters but, man in his greed, lust and hate, poisons the waters and dries up the fountain, paralyzing wisdom and knowledge, killing off his seed. Whereas when he lives in the Spirit, he may use wisdom and knowledge as a lens to magnify the Divine Powers which are his birthright.

TRUTH IS HATEFUL in the life of the man with a sluggish mind because he resents anything that will upset his own vain code of living; he snubs Truth because he refuses to go deeper than the mark before his eyes and buries his head in the sand pit like an ostrich.

Life is a fabric woven around acts of charity, compassion, tolerance, humility, selflessness, the apex of which is Love. Love is the elixir of life; every cell in man's body is nourished by its impersonal oil.

IF MAN DESIRES to be physically and spiritually fit, he must work for it just as he would work for anything else. He cannot sit in a passive state and wish that he were perfect; he must clean the bottle of its old dregs and make way for the new wine.

Were a friend to present a new and beautiful gift of some rare nature, it would be up to the receiver to keep it in perfect condition by caring for it; if this gift were destroyed through carelessness, one could not blame the friend nor the gift. It is the same with the body: a perfect vehicle is necessary to house the soul and man is responsible for its state and keeping.

GOD GAVE MAN dominion over the earth and lower kingdoms; yet man whiles away his power in uselessness until eventually he calls down his wrath upon a God whom he believes has forsaken him. What man is, depends entirely upon the images he holds in mind. When man thinks, he starts a chain of CAUSES which will create EFFECTS in harmony with his thought. Thoughts are things...and every thought held in consciousness for any length of time must manifest itself in man's environment. Thought is energy, and mental images are concentrated energy. Energy concentrated on any definite purpose becomes power.

Things are first born in the imagination. Imagination is the instrument by which man has opened all fields into new worlds. To mentally grasp and take hold of this force, is to control one's circumstances. There is no longer the groping and stumbling about in the dark; man

calls upon his inner forces at will.

MAN MUST BE ACTIVE; all things were given him to use for his well being. The talent unused decays and is lost: for this, man is responsible. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

Now let man face the facts and be true to himself. Let him think back carefully and review his life, and if he be honest, he will find that not a single experience he has known can be traced to any other cause than his own thinking. It is the Law that everything man thinks must manifest itself in his experience. That is why the student on the Path will always seek first, the cause, thereby removing the effect *All life is motion, cause and effect.*

MAN'S SOUL is the Great Book and his conscience the indelible ink which writes the accusation within its pages. If man were to learn his true relationship to God and what God is, this mockery of misunderstanding would be removed. God is symbolic of the Universal Force, the Creative Power which manifests Itself throughout all Creation, on all planes, and so much more of which man is yet ignorant.

The man who can recognize God in all, regardless of the stage of evolution, is at a point of spiritual and mental understanding far travelled on the road of soul development. Such a concept of God leaves no room for condemnation, hatred, criticism and other ignoble passions.

SUCH MEN MINGLE with crowds, and are rulers of men. They wear no crown of piety, nor do they carry a scepter of political force; they bare no sign, yet they bear a strange influence upon the lives of those whom they meet. To feel a kinship with God is to feel strength and greatness without vain conceit; it means losing all fear, keeping each day holy, loving one another with an impersonal love and losing one's self in some service or useful work.

"Let none turn over books or roam the stars in quest of God, who sees Him not in man."

The acts of this life are the destiny of the next.

— Eastern Proverb

THE VISION OF THOREAU

Bess Foster Smith

WHEN I THINK on Henry David Thoreau and ponder his deep understanding of life, I visualize a scene of myself walking in the woods and coming upon his little cottage at the edge of Walden Lake. There I see him, sitting in the doorway, clothed in a halo of sunlight and wrapped in a reverie.

He seems to be listening to something the bees are telling him, and to the melodies the song birds are trilling for his benefit, at the same time giving attention to the playful little wood creatures who are showing their love and confidence in all the ways they know.

I WOULD RETREAT without disturbing this delightful scene, but my gentle friend, sensing my approach, beckons me to a seat beside him and invites me to partake of the enchantment. I cannot resist his engaging smile. He talks me into it without saying a word.

It is certainly peaceful sitting here in the warm sunshine. Thoreau knows how to "suck the very marrow out of life." He is in "that mental ecstacy which cannot be interrupted." I, too, am soon wrapped in the spell.

AS HE HAS WRITTEN, everlasting life grows all about us. The strawberry vines, the blackberry bushes, goldenrod, scrub oak, sand cherries, blueberries and ground-nut all nestle in their proper places. Against the house the sumacks cluster and young pitch-pine and hemlock border a path down to the tiny lake. It is as though I were reading from the pages of his book. The thoughts seem to be my own, but I know I am stealing some of the glory that lies in his mind.

So we sit and mind not how the hours go by. Each of us is smiling over our good fortune, for this is time over and above one's usual allowance, and we are not encumbered or mortified by memory. Paraphrasing his words, it is like a new testament—*the Gospel according to the Moment.* We are being blessed by this present occasion, as we can always be blessed, if we can hold to the present, and take advantage of every act that befalls us. We are filling this moment that is trembling between two eternities and are finding it sweet.

I REMEMBER HE SAID, "The mold under our feet is sweeter than any other for the earth is not a mere fragment of dead history, but is living poetry like the leaves of a tree that precedes flowers and fruit." (The *now* being the leaves—what comes hereafter, the flowers and fruit.)

We reflect that this moment is is not a solitary phenomonon, never to happen again, but that it will happen forever again and again and an infinite number of times.

As gentle rain makes the grass many shades greener, so our thoughts brighten our insight. We are like new corn, growing. New shoots can come up and grow out from our old gnarled lives. We can take root to bear fruit high above in the air and the light. (This is what I think he is saying.)

I KNOW I READ somewhere in his book of essays that at such a time as this one wonders why the jailor does not leave open his prison doors, why the judge does not dismiss his case, why the preacher does not dismiss his congregation. It must be because they do not obey the hint God has given them, or accept the pardon which he freely offers.

In such an atmosphere as this my whole body is as one sense imbibing delight at every pore. I, too, have a strange liberty in nature. If I compare myself with other men, it seems as if I were more favored by the gods than they, beyond any deserts I am conscious of.

I HAVE CAUGHT his spirit, and now for me, too, "The sun shines more brightly than ever it has done. It shines in our minds and hearts, and lights up our lives with a great awakening light, as warm and serene and golden as on a bank-side in Autumn. Now I begin to see that only that day dawns to which we are awake and that there is ever more and more day to dawn. The sun is but the Morning Star."

Thoreau once said, when asked why he went to live in the woods, that he went to see if he could not learn the essential facts of life and not, when he came to die, discover that he had not lived. And now, after sitting here in his doorway, wrapped in the glory of the woods, I am convinced that he did find a straighter way than most of us, and that I have been blessed indeed under the serene guidance of his presence.

When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and regretfully on the closed door, that we do not see the one which has opened to us.

— From SUNSHINE MAGAZINE

TRUTH OF MYSTICISM

The critic of mysticism may argue as follows: "It is not necessary to suppose that the saints and mystics are consciously saying what is not true. But they must be in some way deluded. The experience of which they speak is *impossible,* because it is self-contradictory. For consciousness of any kind depends on contrast, discrimination, difference. If discrimination of differences disappears [as in mystical experience], consciousness disappears with it; we simply become unconscious."

BUT IT MUST BE pointed out that, by exactly the same sort of logic, a man born blind, who is aware of the world only by touch, could prove that there cannot be such a thing as sight. His argument will go as follows: "Consciousness means the awareness of things by touch. Therefore part of the meaning of consciousness is contact between the body and the thing which is being experienced. But these people who talk about sight say that it is an awareness of things at a distance, or without contact of the body. But this is self-contradictory because being in contact with the object is part of the meaning of experiencing or perceiving it."

BOTH THESE ARGUMENTS are based on pure logic and not on experience. And they are both refuted in the same way, by experience...

OF COURSE WE might say that the saint or mystic is telling lies, or is at least in some way deluded, as the blind man could say the same of the man who sees. But it seems to me that, in view of the constant reiteration of the same things by innumerable mystics in different ages and countries and cultures, in view of their agreement with one another about the essentials of their vision—of which a vast literature of evidence is in existence—this explanation is not reasonable. The reasonable explanation lies in believing what they say.

— W. T. Stace
RELIGION AND THE MODERN MIND

LIFE AFTER DEATH

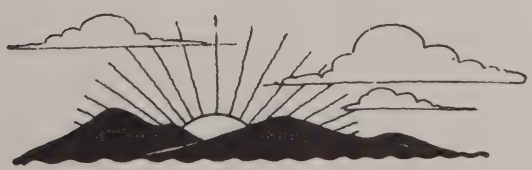
IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL, we read that King Nebuchadnezzer had a strange dream one night. Next morning he tried to recall his dream but could not. He had a feeling the dream was important, so he called his counsellors and asked them to recall his dream and explain its meaning. They confessed their inability to grant the king's request and declared, "There is not a man on earth can discover and declare the king's dream." Daniel learned of the monarch's dilemma and prayed to God, asking that the secret of the dream be revealed to him. His prayer was answered and he exclaimed jubilantly, *"Blessed be God—He knoweth what is in the darkness."*

In these ten words we have the key to Life's mysteries.

FOR MANY PEOPLE there is no darkness quite so deep and mysterious as that which covers the end of our lives here on earth. Hundreds of keen thinkers have tried to pierce the darkness of death, but without success. In spite of the darkness enveloping the conclusion of our earthly life we need have no fear, for this great message comes to us—"He knoweth what is in the darkness," and we are assured there is another life beyond the grave. "—Let not your heart be troubled. Ye believe in God, believe also in me...*Because I live, ye shall live also.*"

What greater assurance can we ask than these words that come to us from one whose lips were never stained with falsehood, from him whom we gladly follow as he leads us on to Light, and Love, and Life Everlasting.

— W. J. Thompson



India's Religious Philosophy

PRINCIPLES OF VEDANTA

Swami Vivekananda

(Vedanta, the philosophical basis of Hinduism and of India's many religious sects, found its most eloquent and influential interpreter to the West in Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), the disciple of India's great mystic Ramakrishna and the founder of the Ramakrishna Order. This year, celebrations in many countries are observing the centenary of Vivekananda's birth, so it is fitting at this time that we print the following excerpts of an address he delivered in India before his countrymen in 1897, following an extended visit to America and England.)

...MOST OF THE GREAT religions of the world owe allegiance to certain books, which they believe are the words of God, or some other supernatural beings, and which are the basis of their religion. Now of all these books, according to the modern savants of the West, the oldest are the Vedas of the Hindus. A little understanding, therefore, is necessary about the Vedas.

This mass of writing called the Vedas is not the utterance of persons. Its date has never been fixed, can never be fixed, and, according to us, the Vedas are eternal. There is one salient point which I want you to remember, that all the other religions of the world claim their authority as being delivered by a Personal God or a number of personal beings, angels, or special messengers of God, unto certain persons; while the claim of the Hindus is that the Vedas do not owe their authority to anybody; they are themselves the authority, being eternal—the knowledge of God. They were never written, never created, they have existed throughout time; just as creation is infinite and eternal, without beginning and without end, so is the knowledge of God, without beginning and without end. And this knowledge is what is meant by the Vedas.The mass of knowledge called the Vedanta was discovered by personages called Rishis, and the Rishi is defined as a *seer of thought*—not that the thought was his own. Whenever you hear that a certain passage of the Vedas came from a certain Rishi, never think that he wrote it, or created it out of his mind; he was the seer of the thought which already existed; it existed in the universe eternally. The sage was the spiritual discoverer...

THE SPIRITUAL PORTION of our religion is in the second part of the Vedas: *the Vedanta*, the end of the Vedas, the gist, *the goal of the Vedas*. The essence of the knowledge of the Vedas was called by the name of Vedanta, which comprises the *Upanishads;* and all the sects of India, each one that dares to come within the fold of Hinduism, must acknowledge the Upanishads of the Vedas. They can have their own interpretation, and can interpret them in their own way, but they must obey the authority. That is why we want to use the word Vedantist instead of Hindu. All the philosophers of India who are orthodox have to acknowledge the authority of the Vedanta and all our present-day religions, however crude some of them may appear to be, however inexplicable some of their purposes may seem, one who understands them, and studies them, can trace them back to the ideas of the Upanishads. So deeply have these Upanishads sunk into our race...

THE PRINCIPLES OF RELIGION that are in the Vedanta are unchangeable. Why? Because they are all built upon the eternal principles that are in man and nature; they can never change. Ideas about the soul, going to heaven, and so on, can never change; they were the same thousands of years ago, they are the same today, they will be the same millions of years hence. But those religious practices which are based entirely upon our social position must change with the changes in society... If in modern times our society requires changes to be made, they must be met, and sages will come and show us the way how to meet them; but not one jot of the principles of our religion will be changed; they will remain intact...

In a nation and race which has devoted the greatest part of its energies to the thought of philosophy and spirituality (nobody knows for how many thousands of years), it is quite natural that there should be so many sects; indeed, it is a wonder that there are not thousands more... I shall take up the common grounds, the essential principles of all these sects, which every Hindu must believe.

THE FIRST is the question of creation, that this Nature, Maya, is infinite, without beginning. It is not that this world was created the other day, not that a God came and created the world, and since that time has been sleeping; for that cannot be. The creative energy is still going on. God is eternally creating—is never at rest. Remember the passage in the *Gita* where Krishna says: 'If I remain at rest for one moment this universe will be destroyed'. If that creative energy which is working all

around us, day and night, stops for a second, the whole thing falls to the ground. There never was a time when that energy did not work throughout the universe, but there is the law of *cycles*. Our Sanskrit word for creation, properly translated, should be *projection*, and not *creation*. For the word creation in the English language has unhappily got that fearful, that most crude idea of something coming out of nothing, creation out of non-entity, non-existence becoming existence, which of course I would not insult you by asking you to believe. Our word, therefore, is projection...

Time, space and causation are all within this Nature. To say, therefore, that it had a beginning, is utter nonsense. No question can occur as to its beginning, or its end. Therefore, wherever in our Scriptures the words beginning and end are used, you must remember that it means the beginning and the end of one particular cycle; no more than that.

WHAT MAKES this creation? God...We see that there is partiality in the universe. One person is born happy, and another unhappy; one is rich and another is poor; this shows partiality. Then, there is cruelty also, for here the very condition of life is death. One animal tears another to pieces, and every man tries to get the better of his own brother. This competition, cruelty, horror and sorrow day and night, is the state of things in this world of ours. If this be the creation of a God, that God is worse than cruel, worse than any devil that man ever imagined. Ay! says the Vedanta, it is not the fault of God that this partiality exists, that this competition exists. Who makes it? We ourselves. *There is a cloud shedding its rain on all fields alike. But it is only the field that is well-cultivated, which gets the advantage of the shower; another field, which has not been tilled or taken care of, cannot get that advantage. It is not the fault of the cloud. The mercy of God is eternal and unchangeable;it is we that make the differentiation. But how can this difference of some being born happy and some unhappy be explained? They do nothing to make that difference! Not in this life, but they did in their last birth, and the difference is explained by this action in the previous life.*

WE NOW COME to the *second principle* on which we all agree, not only all Hindus, but all Buddhists, and all Jains. We all agree that *life is eternal*. It is not that it has sprung out of nothing, for that cannot be. Such a life would not be worth having. Everything that has a beginning in time must end in time. If life began but yesterday, it must end tomorrow, and annihilation is the result. Life must have been existing.... Each one of us is the effect of the infinite past; the child is ushered in-

to the world, not as something flashing from the hands of nature, as poets delight so much to depict, but he has the burden of an infinite past; for good or evil he comes to work out his own past deeds. That makes the differentiation. *This is the law of Karma.* Each one of us is the maker of his own fate. This law knocks on the head at once all doctrines of predestination and fate, and gives us the only means of reconciliation between God and man. We, *we,* and none else, are responsible for what we suffer. We are the effects, and we are the causes. *We are free therefore.* If I am unhappy, it has been of my own making, and that very thing shows that I can be pure if I will. The human will stands beyond all circumstance. Before it, the strong, gigantic, infinite will and freedom in man, all the powers, even of nature, must bow down, succumb, and become its servants.

THE NEXT QUESTION, of course, naturally would be, what is the soul?...We all agree that souls are without beginning and without end, and immortal by their very nature; also , that all powers, blessing, purity, omnipresence, omniscience are buried in each soul. That is a grand idea we ought to remember. In every man and in every animal, however weak or wicked, great or small, resides the same omnipresent, omniscient soul. The difference is not in the soul, but in the manifestation. Between me and the smallest animal the difference is only in manifestation, but as a principle he is the same as I am, he is my brother, he has the same soul as I have. This is the greatest principle that India has preached. The talk of the brotherhood of man becomes in India the brotherhood of universal life, of animals, and of all life down to the little ants,—all these are our bodies....

The goal of the soul, the Atman, is freedom. That is no peculiarity of our religion. We also have heavens, and hells too, but these are not infinite, for in the very nature of things they cannot be. If there were any heavens, they would be only repetitions of this world of ours on a bigger scale, with a little more happiness, and a little more enjoyment, but that is all the worse for the soul. There are many of these heavens...What is then worth having? Freedom. *Even in the highest of heavens, says our Scripture, you are a slave; what matters it if you are a king for twenty thousand years? So long as you have a body, so long as you are a slave to happiness, so long as time works on you, space works on you, you are a slave. The idea, therefore, is to be free of external and internal nature. Nature must fall at your feet, and you must trample on it, and be free and glorious, by going beyond...*

THERE ARE TWO IDEAS of God in our Scriptures; the one, the

personal, and the other, the impersonal. The idea of the Personal God is that He is the omnipresent creator, preserver and destroyer of everything, the external Father and Mother of the universe, but One who is eternally separate from us and from all souls; and liberation consists in coming near to Him and living in Him. Then there is the other idea of the Impersonal, where all those adjectives are taken away as superfluous, as illogical, and there remains an impersonal, omnipresent Being...In the Vedas it is not the word 'He' that is used, but 'It', for 'He' would make an invidious distinction, as if God were a man. 'It', the impersonal, is used, and this impersonal It is preached. This system is called the Advaita Vedanta.

And what are our relations with this Impersonal Being? *That we are He. We and He are one.* Every one is but a manifestation of that Impersonal, the basis of all being, and misery consists in thinking of ourselves as different from this Infinite, Impersonal Being; and liberation consists in knowing our unity with this wonderful Impersonality...

SOME REMARKS ought to be made here. It is only through the idea of the Impersonal God that you can have any system of ethics. In every nation the truth has been preached from the most ancient times—love your fellow-beings as yourselves. In India it has been preached, 'love all beings as yourselves'; we make no distinction between men and animals. But no reason was forthcoming, *no one knew why it would be good to love other beings as ourselves.* And the reason why is there, in the idea of the Impersonal God; you understand it when you learn that the whole world is one—the oneness of the universe—the solidarity of all life—that in hurting anyone I am hurting myself, in loving anyone I am loving myself. Hence we understand why it is that we ought not to hurt others. The reason for ethics, therefore, can only be had from this idea of the Impersonal God.

WHAT A MINE OF STRENGTH is in this Impersonal God, when all superstitions have been thrown overboard, and man stands on his feet with the knowledge—I am the Impersonal Being of the world! What can make me afraid? I care not even for nature's laws. Death is a joke to me. Man stands on the glory of his own Soul, the Infinite, the Eternal, the Deathless...without beginning and without end, before whose magnitude the suns and moons and all their systems appear like drops in the ocean, before whose glory space melts away into nothingness, and time vanishes into non-existence. This glorious Soul we must believe in. Out of that will come power. Whatever you think, that you will be...All knowledge is in me, all power, all purity, and all freedom. Why cannot I express this knowl-

edge? Because I do not believe in it. Let me believe in it and it must and will come out. This is what the idea of the Impersonal teaches. Make your children strong from their very childhood, teach them not weakness, nor forms, but make them strong, let them stand on their feet, bold, all-conquering, all suffering, and first of all let them learn of the glory of the Soul. That, you get alone in the Vedanta,—and there alone. It has ideas of love and worship and other things which we have in other religions, and more besides; but this idea of the Soul is the life-giving thought, the most wonderful. There and there alone, is the great thought that is going to revolutionize the world and reconcile the knowledge of the material world with religion.

—From LECTURES FROM COLOMBO TO ALMORA, published by Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, India. Copyrighted.

MEN LIKE GODS...

I think continually of those who were truly great.
Who, from the womb, remembered the soul's history
Through corridors of light where the hours are suns,
Endless and singing. Whose lovely ambition
Was that them lips, still touched with fire,
Should tell of the Spirit clothed from head to foot in song...

Near the snow, near the sun, in the highest fields
See how these names are feted by the waving grass
And by the streamers of white cloud,
And whispers of wind in the listening sky.
The names of those who in their lives fought for life,
Who wore at their hearts the fire's centre.
Born of the sun they travelled a short while towards the sun,
And left the vivid air signed with their honour.

— Stephen Spender

THE ONLY NOBILITY...

I BELIEVE in an aristocracy, not of power based upon rank and influence, but an aristocracy of the sensitive, the considerate and the brave. Its members are to be found in all nations and classes, and all through the ages; and there is a secret understanding among them when they meet. They represent the true human traditions, the one permanent victory of our queer race over cruelty and chaos. Thousands of them perish in obscruity, a few are great names...

Their temple, as one of them remarked, is the holiness of the heart's affection, and their kingdom, though they never possess it, is the wide open world. The saviour of the future, if ever he comes, will not preach a new gospel. He will use this aristocracy. He will make effective the wisdom, the good will, and the good temper already existing.

— E. M. Forster

EPITAPH

(To Be Desired)

Here lies a man unnoted of the world,
The unabiding world of greed and noise.
He heard a mocking in the bells of fame,
And held all war the fidgeting of boys.

Not fearing peace, he feared not anything;
Loving all life, he scarce had need of prayer.
He knew there was not anywhere to go
From out God's heart; he was, and he is, There.

— A. E. Johnson

PEACE IS POWER

Toilworn
And weak
God's strength
I seek.

Now peace
Each hour
Gives me
Power.

— Loreta Inman

"...THE WINGS OF THE MORNING—"

ALL PEOPLE WHO FLY the airlanes must have a guiding, workable faith within them and a constant prayer on their lips. All pioneers in any field feel the Hand of God upon them and their trust in Him gives the strength, the courage and the will to believe that God, not man, is the Pilot in every life.

WHETHER ONE IS AWARE of it or not, an air-flight challenges one's faith and trust in a Power Higher than ourselves. To overcome all fear of disaster requires some thought and a placing of life's values on the altar of trust and prayer, even though we do not want to acknowledge sometimes that we are religious. In the face of momentous danger man often, for the first time, turns to God...and prays. Sometimes it is difficult to find words to express what one feels, but words are much less important than the communication with God through sheer desire in the heart to acknowledge Him.

— Velta Myrle Allen

THEY THAT SIT IN DARKNESS

Clara Mills Ward

TODAY, with the world picture so confused, it is difficult to escape bitterness, apathy or resignation. It becomes more and more obvious that we must find, and quickly, something solid to stand on. Man's only hope lies in finding a sound, workable philosophy of a religio-scientific nature: in other words, a practical means of bringing God's law to bear upon the everyday experiences of life.

The present is waiting to be understood, interpreted and absorbed. As more is learned about the vast continents of the unconscious and the intuitive, thus making us "see" in a new way, it may help us put a construction on reality in human terms that can be grasped by anyone.

IGNORANCE OF A TRUTH does not mean nonexistence of it. Jesus gave an interpretation of an Invisible Presence that "did the works," or a Working Presence. Since the people were startled by what he said, it is evident that this was unknown to their world and generation.

That this revelation had to do with peace and health is recorded in Matthew 4:16: "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." This "light" (understanding) brought hope and they were relieved of distress, after this new consciousness or feeling came to them. The help came from the *change* in their consciousness that the teaching of Jesus brought about. It was the *spirit of this consciousness* that loosed their shackles and tensions.

Paul, too, understood this when he admonished: "Let that *mind* be in you which was also in Christ Jesus". And he gave a pattern or model for the perfect mental state as: "Christ-in-you, the hope of glory". It is this Christ principle that we need to incorporate into our thoughts. Even while active we can meditate by subconsciously holding to the idea, "I am a manifestation of the Divine Self", or a similar affirmation.

HERE IT MUST BE emphasized that Jesus taught something that brought a *changed* viewpoint. As understanding is opened to perceive, "they that sit in darkness shall see." The teaching of Jesus gave this needed light, with the right shade of consciousness and expectancy for the healing of their distresses. The gathering of crowds denotes interest. As he taught and healed, it is shown that the viewpoint and feelings of those, "which

sat in the shadow of death", needed a change, as is always indicated with those who are despondent, anxious or apprehensive.

BY HIS WORKS, Jesus gave witness to an eternal truth, not then generally known among his countrymen. He stated positively that he did not and could not, personally, do the "works", but gave an interpretation of "Our Father" as an Invisible Working Presence, and with testimony that the truth he taught operated as a Judging Law that responded in a way that healed and saved.

TO FOLLOW in his teaching is fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah found in Matthew 4:14. May the rays of this Light cancel every darkened region!

CHANGE AND GROWTH

A crescent moon, a rose half-blown
Set the heart to dreaming.

Winter's drab, a man half-grown—
Look beyond the seeming.

Melting snow and budding flowers
After March winds blowing.

Stormy days and midnight hours—
The soul begins its growing.

Daylight changing into dark,
Moon expanding, waning.

But Spirit-life—undying spark,
Glory ever gaining.

— Mildred Long

THE WHITE HOUR

Mark Halpern

THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES man has been trying to attain a state of utopian blessedness. But it is evident that Providence has not planned this earth to be a place of ease in which humanity might vegetate in a fanciful world of ideal perfection. Thus it is that blessedness seems as remote today from mankind as it has ever been in the past history of the race.

Yet it would be wrong to say that no members of the human family have ever entered into the sublime state of blessedness. Here and there, in various parts of the earth and in different ages, there have been recorded the isolated cases of nobly heroic souls who succeeded in liberating themselves from the restless turmoil of mental and emotional distress. Whereby they entered into the peace that passeth all understanding.

If we ask ourselves how we, too, may win such a state of blessedness for our own, we can find guidance in the introductory verses of the first Psalm: *"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper...."*

TRUE, IT IS NOT given unto all to find blessedness in living a godly life of highest spirituality. One need not despair, however, if he feels himself to be more of a worldly nature, of the earth earthy. Let him but find his true work in life and lose himself in it. Let him desire with all his heart, nay, let him pray continually that he find his work. For the hour in which he discovers it, will be the glorious White Hour of his life. And he will realize the truth of Thomas Carlyle's words of wisdom:

"Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness...To make some nook of God's Creation a little fruitfuler, better, more worthy of God; to make some human hearts a little wiser, manfuler, happier—more blessed, less accursed! It is a work for a God..."

* * *

SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, certain cities have been regarded as

sacred by the peoples of different lands and religions. Benares of India, Jerusalem of Palestine, and Rome of Italy have been the destinations of many a holy pilgrimage for thousands of years. Also there is the city of Mecca, with its mosques and minarets—the Holy City of the Mohammedans. Long ago there lived in Mecca a young man in his early twenties by the name of Abdallah. His father was a physician, who had always hoped that Abdallah would choose the same profession for his life's work. But Abdallah had no inclination toward such a career. Indeed, he seemed to have no interest in a career of any kind.

Knowing of his father's cherished dreams for him, Abdallah had begun to prepare himself for the calling of physician a few years before. But he had failed miserably. And yet, Abdallah had always felt that there was a work for him to do in the world. All his young friends had found their places in the scheme of things without much difficulty and apparently with no indecision. Why, he often asked himself, was he alone drifting from one thing to another, unable to give all his energies to any one activity?

HIS FATHER, besides being a good physician, was a wise philosophical man. Where another parent might have threatened and used his authority to compel his son to take up the noble profession of a physician, Abdallah's father realized that unless one had his heart in his work he could be no great success at it. He also recognized the fact that man has the sacred right of his own freedom of will to live according to the dictates of his individual conscience, provided his manner of living is not inimical to the general welfare of the rest of the people.

Having such an understanding parent, Abdallah was fully appreciative of his good fortune in that respect. It grieved him that he had failed to live up to his parent's highest expectations. And as though that in itself were not enough to oppress his heart with a sense of guilt and utter futility, there was his lovely Sharene to consider. He could not expect her to keep the mutual vow they once had made that they would have none other for their companion through life. He had no definite means of livelihood—he had not yet found his life's work and he knew not when he would find it.

After having spent many a long sleepless night trying to discover some way in which he might be justified in becoming Sharene's husband, he gave it up as hopeless. It would not be fair to his beloved one.

When next they met near their favorite mosque, Abdallah spoke to her of his discouragement as to their future together: "We must not see each other again, Sharene. It would only make it more difficult for us to take our final parting. I am not worthy of thee. I am of no use to myself or to others—I am no more than an idle drifter on the sea of life. It seems that everyone in the world has his work except me. I have failed thee, my beloved—even as I have failed my father. Let this be our farewell forever, Sharene. I can bring thee naught but ill-fortune."

"NAY, SPEAK NOT SO, Abdallah. Thou has brought me happiness every moment we have been together. I have no fear of my future with thee. From the first moment I saw thee, I have known that thou and none other art my destined one."

"Would that I could think it were so, O thou fairest and most of womankind. But my love for thee is too sacred to permit me to take thee for my own, when I am nothing but a shiftless fellow unable to find a definite means of livelihood."

"Ah, Abdallah, why must thou dwell on thy present state of indecision. Thou art still young—thou must not despair of finding thy life's work. Thou must have faith that Allah will reveal what part thou art to play in life when the right time comes. Have patience, my beloved one—naught that is worth while cometh without patience."

Abdallah was about to reply, when from high up in the minaret, which ascended to the heavens like a tapering finger above the mosque, came the plaintiff cry of the muezzin, proclaiming to the people the hour of prayer: "Allahu Akbar...", he called out from his lofty perch. Immediately as Abdallah sank to his knees, a feeling of infinite peace entered his heart and pervaded his entire being. It was always thus whenever the first sound of the muezzin's voice came to his ears. All his doubts and questionings would disappear, and he would feel that all was well with him and with the world. So, it had been even from the days of his boyhood, when he would kneel reverently and gaze up with longing eyes of hero-worship at the muezzin calling from the heights of the minaret his "Allahu Akbar...."

AND NOW, FROM BESIDE HIM, he heard Sharene whisper: "Pray with all thine heart, Abdallah—pray to Allah and entreat Him to reveal unto thee thy appointed work. And give thine oath that thou wilt abide by Allah's will whatever it be."

And Abdallah, feeling more uplifted and inspired at that moment than ever before, did pray to Allah with all the fervor of his soul, until he seemed to ascent in ecstasy from where he was kneeling. And lo! as he gazed up to the lofty station on the minaret where stood the muezzin still summoning the people to prayer, it seemed to him that the muezzin was he himself, Abdallah. And he was clothed in shining light, like the Angel Gabriel, calling out in a great paean from the depths of his soul: "Allahu Akbar..." till it seemed to him that he was summoning all the people of the world to join in prayer to the one God of the Universe....

Ah, never had Abdallah dreamt that such glorious joy could be experienced by man. For he was living his White Hour—his White Hour in which he had discovered his work. He would be a muezzin—it was the will of Allah! What greater work could there be for a man than to unite the souls of the people in common prayer of worship to the one Father of them all....

* * *

UNTIL MAN FINDS his true work in life, he cannot be whole and complete. But if man has faith that there is a work for him somewhere which he will some day find, he will never lose heart. For—

"To every soul, and soon or late,
There comes a pause in time,
When stands revealed in sudden flash
Life's one White Hour sublime.

An hour in which eternity
Pours balm on earthly cares;
Man knows his part in Plan of God—
No longer doubts, but dares...."

WHAT CAN PRAYER DO?

Roy Wallace Thomas

My wife tells that when she was a little girl returning from a party she discovered she had lost her handkerchief. Frightened, she thought that prayer would enable her to find it. Instead of turning back, she ran home to kneel by her bed where she prayed that she might find the lost article. Then she rush-back to the scene of the party and found her handkerchief under a lilac bush. She was certain that her prayer had been effective.

MANY EARNEST ADULTS hold to a belief in prayer as simple as faith of childhood. The issue is not that the Creator, busy with the Milky Way and its 100,000,000 suns and the millions upon millions of similar "island universes", is too busy to attend to the petty wants of so tiny an animated speck as man. Some cynics do nurture this argument. But let us ask, "What holds the constituent dust of these trillions of star-clouds together and keeps them on their orbits?" Gravitation. "What controls those motes of volcanic star-dust sailing through the air and painting the glorious sunset?" Gravitation. And what is gravitation? The best metaphysical answer is that gravitation is one of the ways (as is all natural law) in which the Creator works. It is absured to say that this Creator cannot also attend to all the wants of man, when man cooperates.

BEYOND DOUBT the girl would have found her handkerchief had she returned confidently to the lilac without prayer. God does not, evidently, expect to do for a man what the man can do for himself. Often we learn best by doing. But let the child pray untroubled, though his prayers be exclusively petitionary. And *let the adult pray as a man*, cautious with petition but strong with the commitment that alone can bring the light and power which unfold the divine in him.

In prayer, may we expect all petitions to be granted? Years ago the brilliant author, Mary Austin, wrote a little book called, "Can Prayer Be Answered?" After practising prayer for thirty-five years she wrote: "I would hardly go so far as to say that you can get anything you want by prayer, but that you can get anything you need for completion and fulfillment; that prayer itself is merely the process of fulfillment."

Jesus' teaching on prayer reached its climax in the recognition that true prayer is more than words. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

Why did he make his definition of prayer so dramatic? This he did to get away from the popular misconceptions of his day, still in vogue in our day, and so he stressed that prayer is more than words. *"Ask"* is lip action, it is true, but *"seek"* is action of the whole self like a shepherd searching for lost sheep or a man entering a field to dig for buried treasure. *"Knock"* also is action involving the whole self like passing through an open door to priceless tomes of wisdom.

EFFECTIVE PRAYER, therefore, is far more than the saying of words. It is a profound act of life, a dynamic contact with Reality, a reaching of the deep self for more life. Commitment is not a one-sided event. It is a cooperation between the out-going spirit of man in his need, and the giving-Spirit of the real universe. The prayer of honest commitment always is answered.

Petition is easy, but commitment often is hard, hence the answer may be slow in coming. Jesus in the garden found commitment hard, and the answer did not come quickly. That is why he made the same prayer three times. Twice he failed. Until that prayer was successful there was no use making another prayer. The third time he succeeded in making the Father's will his will. With his completed inner adjustment to the heart and mind of God, power entered his soul, and with it a great calm. Perfectly relaxed, he was now able to go forth and marvelously fulfill his destiny. His experience is our sublimest heritage of prayer.

RECENTLY, an expert psychologist expressed his conviction that 50,000,000 people in the United States are arrested in thought and feeling. He thinks that ratio is true of all peoples. I think the main cause of this dilemma is in the wrong praying habits of millions of people. Their prayers are merely talk instead of action. They keep "asking" instead of opening mind and heart to the Source of life for the wisdom and courage that the Creator never withholds from the man whose praying is true commitment. Only the praying of the man, not the child, can save the human race in its dire situation.

Frances E. Willard, the great reformer, wrote in her autobiography that the study of astronomy made her dizzy. Few there are who do not share her feeling. The universe is the greatest invention known to the mind of man. But the greater an invention is, the more it demonstrates the genius of its inventor. The increase of knowledge given to us by the researches of the scientist prove to us that the Creator is greater than man ever before dreamed. The proper expert on the chemical and physical universe is the scientist. It has been known from the beginning that there is another universe

which we may call the *universe of Spirit*. In this field the man of religion is the proper expert. He also finds that God our Creator is greater than we can ask or think, as our best theologians are telling us. It is the good fortune of man that he as spirit lives in this second universe also, and that full adjustment to it gives him complete joy now and joy forever. The major factor in this adjustment is the prayer of commitment to his Creator.

THE RETREAT

Happy those early days, when I
Shined in my angel infancy;
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white, celestial thought;
When yet I had not walked above
A mile or two from my first Love,
And looking back, at that short space,
Could see a glimpse of His bright face;
When on some gilded cloud or flower
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity...

Oh, how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plain
Where first I left my glorious train,
From whence the enlightened spirit sees
That shady city of palm trees.
But, ah! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way.
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move,
And when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

— Henry Vaughan (1622-1695)

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

EACH MORNING, as I sit by the window for my meditation, I am fascinated by a row of trees some distance away. The ever-changing beauty, from early spring through the lush green of summer and the brilliance of autumn, to the lacy branches when the leaves are gone, speaks so eloquently of the Hand of God. One winter day, when the sky behind them was heavy and foreboding, I saw a glint of light that grew until I recognized the reflected light of the sun in the east on the cross of a distant church. The cross had been there all the time but it was hidden by many leaves. Only when the trees were stripped bare could I see the cross.

SOMETIMES we have to have dark clouds and be stripped down to the essentials before we realize the inspiration that comes from the Cross. It is there all the time, high and lifted up, but sometimes it takes trials to make us see it.

— Phoebe A. Harris

TRUTH

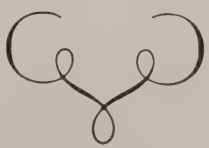
PEACE ABIDES where love prevails.

The serpent hate, coiled to strike, Truth reveals.

Through Truth, all things are made manifest. "There is nothing covered which shall not be revealed; nor hid, which shall not be known."

VERILY, Truth is The Redeemer: "—and ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free."

— Harry Halsey Starrett



CONTEMPLATION BY CHOICE

Marion H. Freeman

OUR DAYS are pervaded with tensions. We have choices to make. Duties encompass us, problems await solution and hands reach out to us from many directions, asking for help. We ask ourselves, will we make the right choice, the best decision, give where the help is most needed?

Sometimes we worry and it may even become a habit. Often we wish that life were less dull, that it were more adventurous, exciting, creative or inspirational. Questions and problems scurry about in our minds and we try to bring order out of confusion and find workable answers and solutions. And we do.

BUT LET US consider, for a moment, the inestimable value of withdrawing from the fast moving pace of every day life and taking a short period each day for soul-lifting meditation. Let us contemplate how life is proceeding for us and what we can do to make it more satisfying. Our own satisfactions bring joy and satisfaction to those about us.

There are a few preliminary requirements. First select a quiet tranquil place, free from the busy, demanding, active world. Create, if you choose, a pleasant nook in some area of your home where you can be alone for a time, where you can allow your thoughts to flow. Let it be a place where it is possible to slip into a mood of contemplation. And let there be stillness.

HERE, LET PEACE flow into your own heart and mind, if only for a short time. Let go the fears and doubts and nagging pressures. Toss them upon the winds, if you will. But be free of them. They will return but in a slightly different form, simply because you have loosed them from you conscious mind. In quietness and in confidence, allow the Spirit of God to flow into and through you. This loving Presence is always with you and about you but it may sometimes become smothered by the stresses of everyday living.

Sometimes it is difficult to attract the quiet, contemplative mood. If so, try drawing in a deep breath. As you release it, let go the burdens which have been weighing heavily upon you and breathe in the loving Spirit of God. It may not work the first time, or the second or the tenth but it *will* work, if you continue to make the effort.

IF ONE MUST, in his own mind, continue to carry the weight of fear, anxiety, anger, discouragement, lone-

liness, grief and hatred, to mention a few attributes not designed by God, it is more difficult to create a mood of peace and love. But does it not seem right, since we are created in the Image of God, that we should do Him honor and reflect His glorious sense of Being and His Love? Should we not let love release more of our imprisoned splendor and reflect, to a greater degree, God's superb design for us?

THE SPIRIT OF GOD is powerful but it cannot break through the wall of fear, anxiety, loneliness and other tensions unless we allow it. God never forces. He gives generously, when we surrender to Him.

We may, then, find or allot special time for meditation and creative thinking and persist until it becomes a need, like one's daily food. And, like one's daily food, meditation turns into some of the spiritual bread which nourishes the soul. It is a communion with one's inner self and with God. And it has a healing quality of its own.

How can we feel wholly integrated when our consciousness is on a physical plane much of the time? Are we not basically spiritual beings?

SOME CIRCUMSTANCES, attitudes and events are in our power to control. But we must know peace and quiet and harmony with Life and God to know when we have the power to adjust a situation. And we need faith in ourselves and in the love of God to bear the trials and griefs which we cannot control but which, in time, will pass from us.

And so, when problems beset us and fears and duties crowd in upon us, or when life seems lacking in inspiration or happiness or satisfaction, let us seek a few moments of meditation and contemplation, by choice. Let us gain, even for a few moments, a plateau of love and peace and closeness to God.

GOD WILL NOT ONLY hear us, but most and best of all, we shall feel His Presence and know His will for us.

WHOLE WORLDS ARE to be found within us; deep down within us lie the secret of evil and the secret of godliness, the depths of Satan, and the depths of Divinity revealed through the spirit...Everything outward is and must be to us a mirror of what is to be found within.

— Gerhard Tersteegen (1697-1769)
German mystic

THE BEST SERMON I EVER HEARD

Maud Strike

IN RELIGIOUS matters my father was broad-minded, one church standing for the same truth as another. Evangelism is not our faith but it did not prevent us from attending the evening service preached by two Evangelists, Dixon and Masterson, on that cold September Sunday in 1927. The service was held in the Shellbrook Presbyterian Church loaned to them for the occasion. A good sermon meant a great deal to my father and Dixon and Masterson seemed kindred souls.

The small church was crowded, the local choir sang hymns, and Dixon, a one-armed man, related anecdotes of famous men he had known. He made only one reference to his missing arm, in connection with the fact that no matter how great our obstacles in life we can if we desire, and are strongminded and determined, overcome them and go on to fulfill the mission in life intended for us by the Lord.

THE MAIN THEME of the sermon was the journey of St. Paul with its trials, tribulations and vicissitudes. Masterson read the lesson and Dixon preached. It was the most enjoyable sermon I ever listened to and I came away feeling refreshed as I had never felt before, with a new outlook on life, confident I could overcome its trials and tribulations and that religion in some form or other is a benefit and necessity for the good of our lives and all mankind.

The sermon was full of gentle humour enriched with the quiet conviction that both men firmly believed in their religion and what they preached. Long before it terminated I found myself wishing it could last longer and be repeated for several Sundays in succession, so thoroughly did I enjoy listening.

WE LEFT THE CHURCH richer than we had ever been. Even our old Ford sedan seemed as luxurious as the highest-priced car. Discussing the sermon on returning home and for days afterwards, we could not praise it too highly. To this day I still have a feeling of satisfaction and quiet pleasure when I recall that evening long ago.

THE TREASURES OF TRUE JOY

Iva Merrill Holt

LIFE WITHOUT the constant awareness of God's presence is empty, boring and disappointing. If we are truly joyous in our faith we do not have to worry and fret over every circumstance. True happiness is deep-rooted, abiding peace of mind and it can be achieved whether we are famous or unknown, well or sick, young or old, rich or poor. We are not happy or unhappy because of circumstances.

The story is told of a king who was always unhappy. He was finally told that if he would go through his kingdom, find the happiest man there, ask him for his shirt and put it on and wear it, he would find happiness. Disguising himself as a peasant he went out looking for the happiest man, but when he found him he discovered that his happiest subject had no shirt.

JOY AND HAPPINESS are within us and in order to have this happiness we may have to make adjustments in our way of thinking. "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind," says Paul. Just as we can walk into a dark room and switch on the electric light, so we can learn to switch our minds from thoughts of ugly things, the hurts of the day, the disappointments, troublesome things, the injustices. Let us forget self-pity, envy, criticism and most of all, let us forget our fears.

Let us look for the beautiful things God has given us to enjoy, from the tiniest flower to His gift of eternal life. We may find beauty in our own dooryard or goodness in our next-door neighbor if we will but look for it. It is a matter of being truly grateful for the gifts of God, whether they be great or small. Let us try to see all things as gifts from Him and then our hearts will well up with a pure joy that overflows into the outer life.

THAT IS true happiness.

NOTICES and COMMENTS

FIP NOTES. During the early part of May, it was necessary for the Executive Secretary to make a trip to Boston with reference to Fellowship matters. While there, she was entertained in the home of Dr. and Mrs. William Hung. Dr. Hung is our president and Mrs. Hung an advisor. On Sunday afternoon, May 5, Mrs. Hung gave a tea at which from twenty-five to thirty persons were present to meet our executive secretary and other advisors of the Fellowship in that area; the previous evening she entertained at a delightful dinner party. Indeed, it was a great privilege to meet many long-time friends and advisors in Massachusetts and vicinity; and to gain new ideas and learn of the various methods undertaken by others to further the cause of Fellowship in Prayer. We have been exceedingly grateful for the many letters that have been received since, expressing appreciation and giving encouragement....Through the kindness and generosity of Professor G. W. Baxter of Harvard University we are the happy recipient of a duplicating machine, which is now being set up in our office, and which will greatly facilitate certain phases of our work. By this means, we hope to keep in closer contact with our advisors and other Fellowship workers and enjoy an inter-exchange of correspondence and ideas, which should be most interesting and helpful....

SPECIAL NOTICE! We wish to announce that our specially designed 1963 Christmas cards are more beautiful than ever this year, so distinctly different, you will truly enjoy sending them to all your friends. Orders and inquiries are invited at anytime between now and Christmas. However, to assure prompt delivery, we suggest that you send in your orders early.

WESTERN ZONE. Mrs. Velta Myrle Allen of Long Beach, California has enthusiastically accepted our invitation to become a Fellowship in Prayer Advisor for the western zone. Recently some of Mrs. Allen's inspirational writings have appeared in the publication, including this issue, and we expect to be printing more of her contributions regularly. She is a woman of rich and varied experience in many walks of life, which includes an extensive activity in art; she has lived in several parts of the country and has travelled widely abroad. Her enthusiasm and empathy for our work make her a very valuable representative on the West Coast.

We heartily welcome Velta Myrle Allen to our Fellowship group.

CONTRIBUTORS. We wish to extend a cordial welcome to Mrs. Phoebe Harris of Lockport, N. Y. and Mrs. Iva Merrill Holt of Norwood, Ohio, who are appearing in FIP for the first time. Mrs. Harris' *Thought For The Day* is printed on page 29, and Mrs. Holt's *Treasures of True Joy* on page 33.

MANUSCRIPTS INVITED. This publication welcomes new writers at all times. Every manuscript is given careful and grateful consideration. Whenever a manuscript is not accepted, it is, of course, returned to the writer with our appreciation and comments.

THE PAPCY. It is encouraging to know that the new Catholic Pontiff plans to continue the program of his predecessor that attracted so much admiration and stirred so many hearts around the world. People of all faiths have eagerly responded to some genuine signs of a growth of unity and mutual cooperation among the great religious bodies of the West. The new Pope will advance the cause of world peace and enlightenment in an important way by continuing to reflect the universal hunger of modern man for an end of divisiveness and intolerance among his fellows. Such a longing knows neither creed nor race nor nation.

HIGH COURT. The recent U. S. Supreme Court decision banning the recitation of the Lord's Prayer from public school classrooms is no cause for surprise, but one more reminder of the gulf that exists between our public and private worlds and a strong inducement to intensify our spiritual lives, strengthen our prayer life, more determinedly than ever, lest imperceptibly we be carried away by the increasing tide of secularism and belief which is steadily moving over the world.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES. FIP is published six times a year at the rate of $3.00. Special rates are available for additional copies. Certain back issues are also available.

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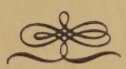
LESSON OF THE PYRAMIDS

...No reason has ever been given adequate to the cost and labour of the work. The narrowness of the chambers proves that it could afford no retreat from enemies, and treasures might have been reposited at far less expense with equal security. It seems to have been erected only in compliance with that hunger of imagination which preys incessantly upon life, and must be always appeased by some employment. Those who have already all that they can enjoy must enlarge their desires. He that has built for use till use is supplied, must begin to build for vanity, and extend his plan to the utmost power of human performance, that he may not be soon reduced to form another wish.

I CONSIDER THIS mighty structure as a monument of the insufficiency of human enjoyments. A king, whose power is unlimited, and whose treasures surmount all real and imaginery wants, is compelled to solace, by the erection of a pyramid, the satiety of dominion and tastelessness of pleasures, and to amuse the tediousness of declining life by seeing thousands labouring without end, and one stone, for no purpose, laid upon another.

— *Samuel Johnson* in RASSELAS



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